

REMARKS

Claims 2, 14, 31, and 38 have been cancelled, and claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 32, 33, 34, 36, and 37, have been amended. Therefore, claims 1, 3-13, 15-30, and 32-37 are pending in the present application.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3, 15, and 33 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. These claims have been rewritten in independent form. Hence, these claims are now allowable. Moreover, dependent claims 2, 4-13, and 16-18 (which depend from allowed claim 3), dependent claims 32-35 (which depend from allowed claim 33) are also allowable. Additionally, claims 36 and 37 are allowable for at least the same reason as claim 33 is allowable. The Applicant respectfully notes that these claims have been rewritten in independent form in the interest of expediency and not necessarily because the Applicant acquiesces to the Examiner's characterization or application of the prior art references.

The Examiner argues that claims 1, 19 and 31 are unpatentable over *Cotreau* (U.S. Patent No. 5,671,272) and *Misu* (U.S. Patent No. 5,426,695). The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Claims 1, 19, and 31 call for storing a value representative of a voltage level between a ring and tip terminal in response to receiving the control signal.

*Cotreau* at least does not teach storing a value representative of a voltage level between a ring and tip terminal in response to receiving the control signal. The Examiner argues that filter 46 in *Cotreau* inherently stores the representative voltage. A filter, by definition, filters signals. Thus, not surprisingly, in the case of *Cotreau*, the filter 46 separates DC component and provides it to a comparator 48. See col. 1, lines 43-46 of *Cotreau*. As an initial matter, even if the Examiner's assertion is true (and it is not) that the filter 46 stores the voltage value, *Cotreau*

teaches that the voltage signal from which the filter 46 separates the DC component is the signal that is sensed across resistor 14, and not the trip and ring terminals, as called for by the claims. The claims should be construed in view of the description in the specification, and Figure 2 of the specification illustrates the trip and ring terminals 237, 239, which are the input terminals to the SLIC 30. Consistent with the description in the specification, claim 33, for example, specifies that the SLIC couples to the subscription loop via the ring and trip terminal.

The resistor 14 shown in Figure 1 of *Cotreau* is analogous to the resistor 248 of Figure 2 in the instant application, where the resistor 248 is part of an external ringing circuit much like the circuit 30 of Figure 1 of *Cotreau*. The flaw in the Examiner's argument is further exposed with respect to claim 18, which specifies that the voltage value is retrievably stored (like a memory, for example). The Examiner argues that the comparator 48 of *Cotreau* "retrieves" this supposedly stored value in the filter 46. The Applicant directs the Examiner's attention to col. 1, lines 44-47 of *Cotreau*, which states that the DC component of the sensed voltage from the filter 46 is provided to the comparator (i.e., not the sensed voltage itself). Again, the DC component is provided because a filter (such as the filter 46) filters signals. For at least these reasons, claims 1, 19, and 31, and their respective dependent claims, are allowable.

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. In light of the arguments presented above, Applicant respectfully asserts that the pending are allowable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

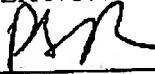
If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Houston, Texas telephone

number (713) 934-4064 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 6, 2004

WILLIAMS, MORGAN & AMERSON, P.C.  
CUSTOMER NO. 23720

By: 

Ruben S. Bains, Reg. No. 46,532  
10333 Richmond, Suite 1100  
Houston, Texas 77042  
(713) 934-7000  
(713) 934-7011 (facsimile)  
ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT(S)